

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (ORIGINAL) Method for producing a cheese product having a firm, resilient and fibrous texture and having the taste of a fresh fermented milk product, comprising the steps consisting in:

a) reducing, by means of grinding or grating, the size of a drawn-curd cheese, a mixture of drawn-curd cheeses, or a mixture of cheeses comprising at least 50% by weight of one or more drawn-curd cheeses;

b) heating, to a temperature of between 60°C and 70°C, and processing, with a shearing action, the drawn-curd cheese, the mixture of drawn-curd cheeses or the mixture of cheeses comprising at least 50% by weight of one or more drawn-curd cheeses, for a length of time which is sufficient to obtain a homogeneous and malleable cheese mass which allows the incorporation of a fermented product;

c) incorporating, with agitation, a fresh fermented milk product which has a live flora, in a sufficient quantity to confer on the final cheese product the aromatic characteristics of the fermented milk product incorporated, the cheese mass being cooled beforehand to a temperature lower

than the destruction temperature of the flora which is present in the fresh fermented milk product;

d) optionally shaping and packaging the product obtained.

2. (ORIGINAL) Method according to claim 1, comprising the steps consisting in:

a) reducing, by means of grinding or grating, the size of a drawn-curd cheese, or a mixture of drawn-curd cheeses;

b) processing, at a temperature of between 60°C and 70°C, with a shearing action, the drawn-curd cheese, or the mixture of drawn-curd cheeses, for a length of time which is sufficient to obtain a homogeneous and malleable cheese mass;

c) incorporating a fresh fermented milk product in this cheese mass, with agitation, at a quantity of less than 20% by weight relative to the total weight of the mixture constituted by the cheese mass and the fresh fermented milk product, the cheese mass being cooled beforehand to a temperature lower than the destruction temperature of the flora present in the fresh fermented milk product; and

d) optionally shaping and packaging the product obtained.

3. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Method according to claim 1 [[or 2]], wherein the quantity of the fermented milk product is between 3 and 20% by weight relative to the total weight of the mixture constituted by the cheese mass and the milk product.

4. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein the fermented milk product has a dry-extract content of less than 30%.

5. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 4~~ claim 1, wherein the fermented milk product is yoghurt.

6. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1, wherein the drawn-curd cheese is mozzarella.

7. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1, wherein the mixture of cheeses comprising at least 50% by weight of one or more drawn-curd cheeses comprises one or more pressed-curd cheeses selected from the group constituted by gouda, cheddar and edam, the pressed-curd cheeses being slightly ripened or unripened.

8. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 7~~ claim 1, wherein the steps a) and b) and the cooling of the cheese mass involve a mechanical processing operation which is carried out in a cutter at a cutting rate of between 50 and 600 rpm.

9. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 7~~ claim 1, wherein the steps a) to c) involve a mechanical processing operation which is carried out in a batch mixer, boiler-mixer, a mixer, a co-mixer or an extruder.

10. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 9~~ claim 1, in which the thermal processing of step b) is maintained for a total duration of between 1 and 5 minutes.

11. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 10~~ claim 1, in which the final cheese product is formed by means of pouring, measuring or moulding and is cooled to a temperature of less than 15°C.

12. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 11~~ claim 1, in which the drawn-curd cheese or the mixture of drawn-curd cheeses is reduced to pieces of less than 2 cm during step a).

13. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 12~~ claim 1, comprising the steps consisting in:

- a) grinding the mozzarella into pieces of less than 2 cm;
- b) heating the ground mozzarella, for from 2 to 4 minutes, to a temperature of approximately 66°C, in a boiler-mixer at a

rotation speed of 160 rpm, then maintaining the ground mozzarella at 66°C for from 1 to 2 minutes;

c) cooling the cheese mass obtained in this manner to 50°C with agitation at 100 rpm;

d) incorporating yoghurt in this cheese mass with agitation at 100 rpm, the yoghurt being added at a quantity approximately equal to 10% by weight relative to the total weight of the mixture constituted by the cheese mass and the yoghurt; and

e) optionally shaping and packaging the product obtained.

14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 12~~ claim 1, comprising the steps consisting in:

a) grinding mozzarella in a cutter with agitation at 1300 rpm for approximately 30 seconds;

b) adding apricot pieces;

c) heating the mixture of ground mozzarella and apricot pieces for from two to three minutes, to a temperature of approximately 70°C, in a cutter at a rotation speed of 500 rpm, then maintaining the ground mozzarella mixture at 70°C for from 40 to 60 seconds, with agitation at 250 rpm;

d) cooling the cheese mass obtained in this manner to 55°C;

d) incorporating kefir in this cheese mass with agitation at 250 rpm; and

e) optionally shaping and packaging the product obtained;

the relative proportions of mozzarella, apricot pieces and kefir, by weight relative to the total weight of the mixture constituted by the mozzarella, the apricot pieces and the kefir being approximately equal to 91%, 4% and 5%, respectively.

15. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 12~~ claim 1, comprising the steps consisting in:

- a) grating a mixture of mozzarella and unripened gouda;
- b) processing the mixture at a temperature of 65°C for 1.5 minutes in a cutter with agitation at 100 rpm;
- c) cooling the mixture to 50°C with agitation at 100 rpm; and
- d) incorporating yoghurt with agitation at 100 rpm;
- e) optionally shaping and packaging the mixture;

the relative proportions of mozzarella, unripened gouda and yoghurt, by weight relative to the total weight of the mixture constituted by the mozzarella, the unrefined gouda and the yoghurt being approximately equal to 60%, 32% and 8%, respectively.

16. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) Cheese product having a firm, resilient and fibrous texture and having the aromatic profile of a fresh fermented milk product which is obtainable by the method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 15~~ claim 1.

17.(NEW) Method according to claim 2, wherein the quantity of the fermented milk product is between 3 and 20% by weight relative to the total weight of the mixture constituted by the cheese mass and the milk product.

18.(NEW) Method according to claim 2, wherein the fermented milk product has a dry-extract content of less than 30%.

19.(NEW) Method according to claim 3, wherein the fermented milk product has a dry-extract content of less than 30%.

20.(NEW) Method according to claim 2, wherein the steps a) and b) and the cooling of the cheese mass involve a mechanical processing operation which is carried out in a cutter at a cutting rate of between 50 and 600 rpm.